

Chabot College
Distance Education Curriculum Support Committee

Course Proposal Form
(Send as an email attachment to DECSC chair)

2005-2006

These questions are meant to provide you, our faculty colleagues, a framework for your Distance Education Curriculum Proposal. These are *guidelines*, not mandates. Much of this emerged from an Academic Senate for California Community Colleges white paper, available in our resource area. We believe careful and thorough consideration of these issues will improve not just your proposal, but also your entire course design. Please feel free to elaborate where you think most important. Note: Please click on *File, Save As* to save this form as a document, so you can work on it and submit it electronically to the DE Curriculum Support Committee chair.

Each proposal or existing course, if delivered by distance education, shall be separately reviewed and approved by the curriculum committee prior to being offered. (Ed Code 55378)

Course Title & Number: English 1A Critical Reading and Composition

Faculty Name: Lisa Ulibarri

1. Need/Justification

- *What is the intent in offering the course by distance education?*

The online format allows accessibility for the growing population of students who, for various reasons, cannot attend regularly scheduled classes. This group includes those in vocational trades, parents, and those whose life circumstances prevent regular attendance.

The intent is to offer this accessible transfer-level (transferable to UC and CSU) course to promote the ability of this demographic of students to complete their educational goals. English 1A is the first college-level course, which demonstrates an apparent demand for this requirement to be available for all students.

The current online format at Chabot, using the Blackboard Course Management System, allows for the student to benefit from all the dynamic learning aspects of an on-campus course in a more accessible format.

2. Course Content Delivery

- *Describe the distance education modalities used to deliver the course content and provide an approximate schedule of the time allocated to each modality. How much of the class will be on-campus lecture, video, email, web, CD-ROM, etc.*
- *Note that the total number of contact hours should approximate the equivalent number of hours required in an on-campus setting. And, because indicators to date suggest that many community college students do better with some face-to-face contact with their instructors, there should be some provision for on-campus or in-person contact.*

English 1A is a 3-unit course that requires three instructional hours per week, a total of 52 instructional hours throughout the term. The course will be primarily conducted using Blackboard, with the exception of two required on-campus meetings (orientation and final exam). Each week, students will be expected to complete online assignments in various forms which will account for the mandated three hours per week.

Within Blackboard, the student will engage in threaded discussions (via the Discussion Board), online readings (through both external links and posted “lessons”), timed quizzes, and peer review. The threaded discussions will take place using the Discussion Board feature and incorporate the readings of the course with aspects of critical thinking. The Discussion Board conveniently offers the students an opportunity to respond to other students and hold a class discussion. I will also provide materials in the form of online lectures, external links, and other resources to guide them through both the discussion topics and writing skills explored in each unit. For assessment purposes, Blackboard allows timed quizzes which would help stress the importance of a particular topic or skill from the course. I will also incorporate the Peer Review process for essays in an effort to promote collaboration and communication between students. Although time-consuming, the Peer Review process is an important aspect of the writing process and allows for students to utilize each other as a resource. In addition to providing various methods of teaching composition and critical thinking, I will readily promote the use of on-campus resources at Chabot (to be discussed further in section 6).

During the initial meeting (as an “orientation” to the course), I will introduce the students to the Blackboard system. In my experience as an Instructional Assistant in the WRAC Center computer labs, I’ve found this very helpful for both the student and the progress of the class. I will also ensure that the students are familiar with the technological expectations of the course (for example, using Blackboard’s email feature, submitting documents using the Digital Drop Box, posting to the Discussion Board, accessing external links and online lectures). The initial meeting will also serve as a method of obtaining a timed, in-class writing sample from each student. This will help to solidify student progress, as well as serve as a model for comparison to the other essays.

During the final class meeting, I will administer a final exam to the class. This final will be a timed, in-class writing that incorporates the course material and writing progress throughout the course. This final meeting will also serve as a culmination to the course

and allow students to “meet” the classmates that they have become so familiar with via Blackboard.

I will also give the students the opportunity to meet with me during on-campus office hours throughout the term.

3. Nature and Frequency of Instructor-Student Interactions

- *Provide examples of course components taught using distance education technology. This will include either or both synchronous—online at the same time and asynchronous—online at different times.*
- *Describe the number and frequency of interaction for students making satisfactory progress and for intervention when students are at-risk of dropping or failing due to poor performance or participation.*
- *For each type of interaction listed above, describe why you believe it will be effective for this particular curriculum and delivery model.*
- *Describe how the interactions will facilitate student learning and how students will benefit from the DE modalities selected.*

While the number and frequency of student-student and student-instructor interaction may vary depending on the assignment, most aspects of the course will be interactive. A student-centered classroom is achievable using Blackboard’s communication features.

The rigorous demands of an online class, especially one centered on writing and composition, require that the instructor ensure that students clearly understand the expectations of the course. In an effort to clarify this, I will provide Announcements which detail the expectations and assignments for the week. Within the course, students will have access to a Course Materials section, which will contain links, written lectures, and other material to supplement the lessons for each week. I will also provide downloadable documents for writing assignments and other necessary aspects of the course. Students can benefit from retaining a “hard-copy” of these documents even when not inside the online classroom. The External Links section of Blackboard will include various links necessary for the course. An example of these would be student services, the Library databases, off-campus resources or Online Writing Labs, and outside sites to provide further information for each topic. Students can benefit from many different methods and presentations of material to allow for the most accessible form of learning environment.

The main components of the course will involve asynchronous interaction. The demographic which is served by the online format can be best reached through a flexible learning environment. Students will be expected to respond to each other, but allowed flexibility in the exact time that might occur as the assignments will be based on a weekly schedule. For example, students will be required to post to various Discussion Board forums each week. They will also be required, within that week, to respond to the posts of their classmates. This is similar to the method of a class discussion, but allows flexible scheduling through the online environment. I will also provide feedback and comments

on all formal writing assignments, posts in the Discussion Board, as well as other assignments. Constant instructor presence is key to an organized, productive online learning environment.

If students are at-risk of dropping or failing, I will communicate privately with them via email their status in the course. While they will have access to their grades via the online grade book, I will also send regular emails informing them of missed essays, missing posts (can result in online “absences”), and invite them to meet with me on-campus to discuss these issues. I can also recommend student resources that could assist in their success in the course (such as English 115 or tutoring). As stated in the English Subdivision Throughline, a course should “increase students' familiarity with and knowledge of the academic culture, themselves as learners, and the relationship of the two” (<http://www.chabotcollege.edu/LanguageArts/english/aathroughline.asp>). It is important that the instructor remain a link for the student and the campus, despite the online location of the classroom.

4. Assignments & Methods of Evaluation

- *List the criteria that will be used to substantiate student learning, and describe the methods of evaluating student progress.*
- *Describe planned interactions and evaluations to ensure participation and verification of student learning that permit timely instructor intervention.*

The course will include the following aspects:

- An on-campus orientation/ intake essay and final exam (within the two required on-campus meetings). These writings will be timed and used as a sample of the student’s writing for comparison. A writing sample is especially important in an online English course due to issues of plagiarism and authenticity of a student’s writing.
- Four main essays, consisting of a total of 8,000 words, including expository and argumentative writing. These essays will be submitted online using Blackboard and returned to the student with instructor comments.
- Online threaded discussions via the Discussion Board. The expectations for each post will be explained in detail for each forum. I will also require students to respond to the post of at least one other student per forum. Each Discussion Board post will be graded according to a posted rubric.
- Online quizzes on reading assignments and/ or writing conventions. These quizzes, allow for important material to be emphasized. It will also assist with evaluation of student progress.
- Peer Review will also be used as a method of interaction between the students. While this can be time-consuming, collaboration with peers is an important aspect of a student-centered classroom. These Peer Reviews will be graded and instructor comments will be provided.

- Reading assignments, from both texts and online, will be a required aspect of the course. I will choose texts in an effort to support the writing instruction and provide another layer of accessibility to the information.
- Individual study is a key component to the online classroom. While I can provide accessible information, it is also expected that the student will spend time taking advantage of the resources provided. This could consist of research, optional reading assignments, and links to various web sites.
- Access to the instructor via the Virtual Office or email at any time. I will respond as quickly as possible. I will reinforce the importance of using the Virtual Office to allow for other students to view the question and instructor response. I will also include the option to meet in person on-campus.
- An Open Chat area, which will allow for casual student conversation. This is important to allow student to gain the same type of interaction as they would in an on-campus course.

I will use the following in my evaluation of student progress:

- Students will be required to access the course site at least two times per week (although course assignments may realistically demand more).
- The four essays will serve as an evaluation of the students' progress in writing instruction. I will grade based on a rubric (which will be included in the syllabus) and the expectations of college-level writing. The grading rubric, along with other grading policies, will be provided on the course syllabus (which will also be available on the course site).
- Online quizzes will also be used as a way to evaluate student progress and learning.
- Students not completing the required Discussion Board assignments will be given an "absence" for that week, along with a score of zero on the assignment. These "absences" may result in being dropped from the course.
- The Discussion Board also serves as a method of evaluation for both writing and critical thinking. As the writing in the Discussion Board is reading-based, the student will have to have read and applied critical thinking skills to the topic in order to respond to the assignment. These posts will also serve as samples of the progress of the student's writing.
- Peer Reviews will demonstrate the process of writing and the importance of drafts. This will also serve as a method of ensuring the authenticity of the student's writing. As all reviewed drafts will be submitted to the instructor, I will be able to compare this to the final draft if necessary.

- The course would also provide the ability for students to give anonymous feedback. This enables students to feel comfortable sharing difficulties they have experienced in the course without identifying themselves. This is similar to the in-person anonymous feedback an on-campus instructor could request.

5. Technical Support

- *Describe the technology necessary to carry out your proposal for an effective DE course. Include an assessment of the adequacy of support personnel required to maintain hardware & software, for both faculty and students.*

The course would require that students have access to a computer, the Internet, and a word-processing program.

Blackboard requires that a computer operate using “Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, or ME; MacOS 9 or MacOS X.” It also requires a minimum of “64 MB of RAM, 1 G of free disk space” and a 56K modem. Students must also have access to “Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher,” which can be downloaded for free via Microsoft. These specifications are available on-campus in several open computer labs. This specification information can be found at <http://www.chabotcollege.edu/DistanceEd/faq/#ComputerRequirements>.

Microsoft Word is the preferred word-processing program and is available on-campus. However, if students have more convenient access to another word-processing program (such as Works, or Word Perfect), I will provide instruction on how to save in Rich Text Format (.rtf) to aid in the submission of documents.

For this online course, students should also have an email account entered in the Personal Information of Blackboard. If students do not yet have an email account, I can assist them in obtaining one at the orientation meeting.

Students who have technical issues will be welcome to email me or post the Virtual Office. As I’ve had experience teaching Blackboard from the student perspective, I can readily provide instruction on the necessary aspects of the course. If it is a Blackboard internal problem (such as an issue with Banner, or a password reset), students will have access to the Blackboard Help Request Form (available at <http://www.chabotcollege.edu/DistanceEd/help/>) or on-campus assistance in the Chabot Library Computer Lab. I will make it clear to students that I will be the main source of support for technical issues to the best of my ability.

6. Student Services

- *Describe how students might access services such as tutoring, counseling, financial aid, and supporting course materials, library materials, learning resources, etc.*

I will inform students of the resources available to them on campus. As most student services offer detailed web sites, the students have access to information about these services online.

As students of Chabot College, they can take advantage of resources such as the WRAC Center, the Tutorials Instructional Program, the campus Library, the Financial Aid office, and academic counseling. Many sites offer online resources such as the Library databases, the Library catalog, Financial Aid Forms, and a counseling appointment request.

Another highly beneficial Chabot resource conveniently available online is CHARLIE (Chabot's online Resource with Links to Instruction in English). "Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from on-campus and off, CHARLIE offers excellent writing models in the form of sample student essays with commentary from Chabot instructors; clear definitions of common types of academic writing (i.e. summary, critique, analysis); useful handouts that you can print out or view on-line; and a great menu of links to instructor-approved on-line resources on reading, writing, research and documentation" (<http://www.chabotcollege.edu/charlie>).

As I am very familiar with campus resources, both online and on-campus, I can guide students to the most appropriate service. I will provide external links to resources related to the course materials and assignments.

7. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

- *Describe how you will accommodate students with disabilities. For a telecourse, is the video close-captioned? If you plan to use Blackboard, please review the accessibility information at <http://www.blackboard.com/products/access/faqs.htm>. For online accessibility, please email your web site to the DSRC Alternative Media Specialist or coordinator. For more information on accessibility resources, visit <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>.*

For students with disabilities, I will work closely with the Disabled Student Resource Center to ensure that the course is accessible. I will practice methods of clear organization and online formatting to enable access to a variety of student learning methods. I will ensure, and include in the syllabus, that students should contact me to make alternate arrangements to comply with their specific learning needs.

I will also take into account the needs of students with different learning styles. I will try to ensure that information is available in a variety of methods to appeal to the different learning styles.

8. Class Size & First Term to be offered

- *Indicate the standard limit for the class and the first term you plan to offer this course.*

I am not currently scheduled to teach the course in the online format (and I fully understand that instructors cannot be officially scheduled until they have been approved to do so). In completing this proposal I hope to add to the availability of sections of this course to fulfill the demand in summer or fall 2006. Each section of this course would have an enrollment limit of 27.

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